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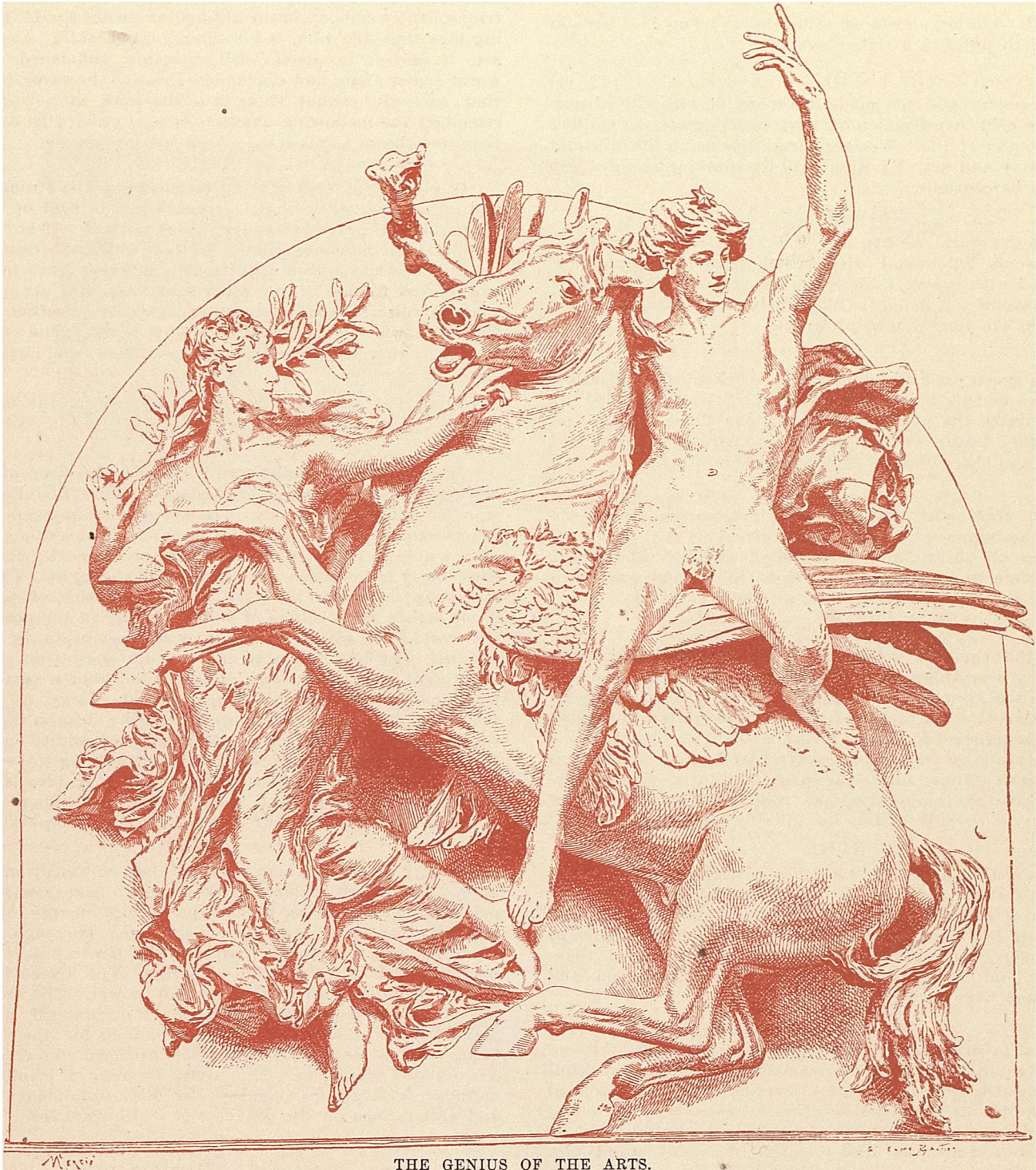
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THE GENIUS OF THE ARTS.

DRAWN BY SAINT-ELME GAUTIER FROM THE GROUP BY MERCIÉ.

ART.

BY WILLIAM R. BRADSHAW.

I.

TO define art is to define life.

II.

Art is a language that describes the souls of things.

III.

Art in nature is the expression of life: in art it is life itself.

IV.

Art is too subtle a quality to be defined by the formula of the critic. It is greater than all of the definitions that have tried to grasp it.

V.

Art is the glowing focus from which radiate thought, imagination and feeling, gifted with the power of utterance.

VI.

True art is generous, passionate, earnest, vivid, enthusiastic. So also is the true artist.

VII.

To satisfy the far reaching longing of the spirit, art makes things more glorious than they are. It is the perfect expression of a perfect environment.

VIII.

To mould his symbols with the same life that fills his conception of the idea, is the supreme effort of the artist.

IX.

As nature from the coarse soil produces flowers, so also the artist from everyday life produces the subtle sweets of art.

X.

Art that is simply utility is not sufficiently decorative to delight every nerve of feeling in the soul. To feed these, many flavors of form and color are necessary, and hence the necessity of art.

XI.

The difference between art and utility is the difference between amorphous trap and columnar basalt.

THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER.

XII.

Where do emotion and imagination begin in art? Where do spirit and flesh unite in a living creature?

XIII.

Eastern poetry and art made life splendid without science, which is the cold investigation of that which was once thrilled with the passion of life. Western inventions make life splendid without poetry and art. By whom will the glorious union of Art and Science be consummated?

XIV.

What is the world we live in? It is for the most part a collection of souls hidebound with treachery and selfishness; of souls covered with a slag, from which have departed the fires of love, and passion and delight. Such incinerated *aliases* of their former selves are your judges, oh artists.

XV.

Art is a green oasis in an arid and mechanical civilization. It creates an earthly home for the soul, for those wounded by the riot of trade, the weariness of labor, the fierce struggle for gold, and the deadly environment of rushing travel, blasted pavements and the withering disappointments of life.

XVI.

Where is that artist that can sway imagination, create emotion, lift the banner of a high ideal, give the soul a keener appreciation of beauty, add to the mind strength and grace, cause the brain to develop new nerves of feeling, and newer cells of thought, that we may salute him as genius?

XVII.

Art is the emotion within made splendid by imagination, that clothes everything with perfection. Like color it dwells only in the soul, but the cause of the sensation is without. In all art, the artist seeks to reproduce the cause of his ecstasy, that he may communicate to others a similar delight. He is like a god, he always gives but never receives, for fame, not money is his recompense. Thus, unlike the man of business, who calculates not to give anything unless he receives more value in return, the artist royally scatters his gifts like God Himself.

XVIII.

Given a soul that can feel sublimely, that can respond to beauty and feel thrilled with the joy of existence, that can feel the burden of anguish, that can appreciate the humors and absurdities of life, and, given the power to adequately represent the knowledge, truth, understanding and conviction of these impressions, in fitting symbols, vitalized by imagination and emotion, then have we both poet and artist.

XIX.

The soul in such inspired moments takes the form of sculptured arabesques, or flowers, or resembles the reflux sea, full of incredible shapes and symbols. It accompanies the march of thought, the profuse swell of emotion, is capable of pain and ecstasy, and seeks to be fed with those delightful symbols of its life which we call art, the most priceless of earthly possessions.

XX.

The age wants the artist. It wants imagination, originality, inspiration, ideality. It requires fertile, dreaming souls, to create ideal breadth. It requires an earthly Nirvana wherein one may escape a selfish, barbarous, pitiless world. There is a great dearth of the coinage of the soul. We want artists to explain the souls of things, not their mechanical construction, but the unseen secret of their purposes, their unspeakable existence. We want heart expanding triumphs to counteract the withering influences of life. If a soul is entranced with man or nature, we also want to feel his fascination, to be penetrated with his rapture. We want a tender-hearted, enthusiastic soul to cure us of stony-hearted paralysis, of marble deadness of effection. In a word, we want an artist.

XXI.

Four things are necessary for art, viz: idea, sentiment, imagination and manipulative skill. After these, comes prestige, or the applause of the world, to crown the work,

XXII.

The art decorator is a type of all art workmen. See him about to manipulate a plastic ornament on the wall. The plaster resembles his idea; its plastic qualities his sentiment, or emotion, the style of ornament into which it is to be moulded resembles his

imagination, and the power of the artist to successfully and triumphantly embody in the finished ornament the living, breathing idea that fills him, is his manipulative skill. Any work of art, if perfect in itself, still remains unfinished until the world comes along and applauds. Prestige, however, is a feature that naturally cannot enter into the work of new artists. It resembles the mellowing qualities of age upon wine and adds a powerful charm to all art.

XXIII.

Originality of idea usually results from the strong emotion and keen imagination that is aroused in the soul of the artist by the object, or abstract idea, contemplated. If he feels profoundly what he contemplates, he feels differently from everyone else, because the calibre of his soul is different both in quantity and quality to that of any other soul. Again, if his imagination can symbolize the soul of the object, idea, or sensation, in a fresh form, this will lend originality to his work. The two prime factors in an artist's equipment are sentiment and imagination.

XXIV.

The artist is a creator. He breathes into dull matter the breath of art and it thenceforth contains a living soul.

XXV.

Most of what is called art is not original conception. The work is simply an echo, an unconscious echo, doubtless, of the work of well known artists. The art studied in years gone by, has become a part of the life of the artist, and although he may not be able to recall either the artist or his work, that he unconsciously reproduced, yet he is still a copyist. This unconscious copying makes his work, as it makes that of hundreds of other artists, faint echoes of works already in the possession of the world. We say to the artist, you must begin to think for yourself, you must begin to criticize life anew from your own standpoint. Let every work done proceed from a waste of blood in your own brain, from the sacrifice of energy in your own soul. You may then gather up your living ideas on this, or that, subject and crystallize them into a work of studied power, and the world will gladly applaud. There is nothing the world loves so much as the taste of living blood. If your idea is rendered plastic with emotion, and shaped into a thrilling image by imagination, fed with your own life, you will achieve fame.

XXVI.

Energy in art is a high relief of idea, sentiment and imagination. The Greek maiden whose physical beauty was least depended upon her attire, is the type of that energy of thought in poetry which is least dependent upon language. Vitality, vigor of form, splendor of limb, was the Greek idea, the object being to attain the perfection of nature. The Greek sculptured the living figure with ideal grace and power. The artist of to-day is in danger of being dwarfed by a mechanical civilization, which results in an over critical fondness for the manner of doing what he is going so do. Such artificial education teaches a simulated simplicity. The artist becomes a manipulator of methods, a juggler who substitutes his euphonious nocturnes and alliterations for the products of real inspiration.

CHOICE FURNITURE.

WE present our readers with an example of an arm chair of Dutch workmanship made towards the close of the seventeenth century, and an arm chair of the French school, the style being Louis XIV.

The Dutch chair is a beautiful piece of furniture which was exhibited at the French exposition in 1884. The Gobelin tapestry, with which the chair is upholstered, constitutes its chief enrichment, for the form of the frame is characterized by the great simplicity of the epoch to which it belongs, which is that of Louis XIV. Both chairs here illustrated belong to the same epoch, but, as will be observed, Dutch workmanship is characterized by much greater simplicity than the contemporary French workmanship. The table shown in the background is covered with a slab of slate is surrounded with a large frame of dark wood, which is encrusted with rich ornaments in polished metal.

The French fauteuil is an equally choice piece of work. This beautiful chair, which was found in the chateau de Fontainebleau, presents the best characters other style of Louis XIV. It possesses symmetry of decoration, heaviness and solemnity of form while the tapestry is magnificently decorated with flowers. During this epoch furniture *de luxe* was generally gilt, the wood having the heavy forms of architecture in stone,